



# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Folsom Field Office  
63 Natoma Street  
Folsom, California 95630  
[www.ca.blm.gov/folsom](http://www.ca.blm.gov/folsom)

AUG 15 2008

4160  
CA180

Certified Mail No.  
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Betty Wooster

### NOTICE OF FIELD MANAGER'S PROPOSED GRAZING DECISION

Dear Ms. Wooster,

#### INTRODUCTION

The current grazing permit (Operator Number 4187) for the Wooster Allotment (4187) expires February 28, 2009. The lease is being renewed for a 10-year period (2008-2019). The Wooster Allotment consists of approximately 40 acres (100% BLM public lands) in two separate parcels. The Sheep Ranch parcel is located just Southwest of Sheep Ranch in Calaveras County, California. The Copperopolis parcel is located approximately 2 miles Northeast of Copperopolis in Calaveras County, California. The current grazing permit authorizes 3 cows from April 1 to June 30 for a total of 9 animal unit months (AUMs) for the Sheep Ranch parcel and 1 cow from January 1 to June 30 for a total of 6 AUMs for the Copperopolis parcel. The total AUMs for the Wooster Allotment is 15.

#### BACKGROUND

A rangeland health assessment was conducted September 13, 2004. A subsequent determination was made that the allotment was meeting the soils, species, riparian/wetland, and water quality standards for rangeland health per the Central California Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health approved in June, 2001.

Results of this assessment and other assessments (cultural, botanical, etc.) were analyzed in an environmental assessment (EA) prepared in August, 2008 (EA CA-180-08-77). A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued for EA CA-180-08-77 on August 14, 2008.

#### FIELD MANAGER'S PROPOSED DECISION

My proposed decision is to implement the proposed action described in EA CA-180-08-77 authorization of livestock grazing use on the Wooster Allotment #4187 with a term of 10 years, February 28, 2008 to March 1, 2018. This proposed decision constitutes my Record of Decision for this EA.



Grazing will be authorized according to the following:

Allotment Name and #	Number	Kind	Period of Use	%Public Land	Amount of Use (AUMs)
Wooster allotment #4187 Sheep Ranch parcel	3	Cow	4/01 – 6/30	100	9
Wooster allotment #4187 Copperopolis parcel	1	Cow	1/1 – 6/30	100	6

The following terms and conditions for this authorization are made part of your permit.

- Comply with the Central California Standards & Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management on all allotments.

#### RATIONALE

This proposed decision is necessary to authorize issuance of a ten year grazing permit in accordance with the grazing regulations of 43 CFR 4100 and be consistent with the Taylor Grazing Act, Public Rangelands Improvement Act and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

This allotment has had a Rangeland Health Assessment conducted, which indicates that the soils, riparian/wetland, species, and water quality standards for rangeland health are being met. An EA has been completed which indicates that there are no significant environmental impacts from the proposed grazing use.

I have determined that the terms and conditions for authorizing grazing on the Wooster allotment are appropriate to achieve management and resource objectives according to the Sierra RMP and S&Gs.

#### AUTHORITY

The authority for this decision includes but is not limited to:

43CFR 4130.2 (a): “Grazing permits or leases shall be issued to qualified applicants to authorize use on the public lands and other lands under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management that are designated as available for livestock grazing through land use plans. Permits or leases shall specify the types and levels of use authorized, including livestock grazing, suspended use and conservation use. These grazing permits and leases shall also specify terms and conditions pursuant to 4130.3, 4130.3-1 and 4130.3-2.”

43 CFR 4130.2 (f): “the authorized officer will not offer, grant, or renew grazing permits or leases when the applicant, including permittees or lessees seeking renewal, refuse to accept the proposed terms and conditions of a permit or lease.”

43 CFR 4130.3: “Livestock grazing permits and leases contain terms and conditions determined by the authorized officer to be appropriate to achieve management and resource condition objectives for the public lands and other lands administered by the Bureau of Land

Management, and to ensure conformance with the provisions of subpart 4180 of this part.”

### ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES

If you wish to protest this proposed decision, you must do so in accordance with 43 CFR 4160.2. Any applicant, permittee, lessee or other interested public may protest the proposed decision under 4160.1 of this title in person or in writing to the Folsom Field Office Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Folsom Field Office, 63 Natoma Street, Folsom, CA 95630 within 15 days after receipt of such decision. Protests should clearly and concisely state the reason(s) the proposed decision is in error.

In the absence of a protest, the proposed decision will become the final decision of the authorized officer without further notice unless otherwise provided in the proposed decision. Should this proposed decision become the final decision, and you or other individuals believe that you are adversely affected by this final decision, you may file an appeal of this grazing decision for the purpose of a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21, 4.470, and Subpart 4160.4. You may also petition for a stay of the decision in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21, pending final determination on appeal. The appeal and petition for stay must be filed with the Folsom Field Office Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Folsom Field Office, 63 Natoma Street, Folsom, CA 95630 within 30 days after receipt of the final decision.

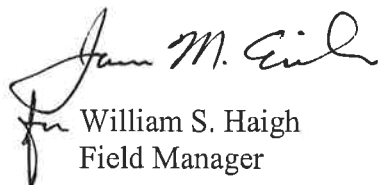
The appeal shall state the reasons, clearly and concisely, why you think the final decision is in error. All reasons for error not stated in the appeal shall be considered as waived and may not be presented at the hearing. Any failure to meet this 30-day appeal deadline will bar you from challenging this decision. If you wish to petition for a stay you must include the stay petition with your appeal. You have the burden of proof to demonstrate why a stay should be granted.

#### Standards for Obtaining a Stay

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied;
- (2) the likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits;
- (3) the likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted; and
- (4) whether the public interest favors granting a stay.

Sincerely,



William S. Haigh  
Field Manager



# United States Department of the Interior

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William T. MacDonald

## NOTICE OF FIELD MANAGER'S PROPOSED GRAZING DECISION

Dear Mr. MacDonald,

### INTRODUCTION

The current grazing permit (Operator Number 3352) for the Hunter Valley Allotment (3352) expires February 3, 2018. The lease is being renewed for a 10-year period (2008-2019). The Hunter Valley Allotment consists of approximately 7900 acres (100% BLM public lands) located just South of Lake McClure in Mariposa County, California. The current grazing permit authorizes 104 cows from February 1 to May 31 for a total of 408 animal unit months (AUMs) for the Hunter Valley Allotment.

### BACKGROUND

A rangeland health assessment was conducted July 14, 2008. A subsequent determination was made that the allotment was meeting the soils, species, riparian/wetland, and water quality standards for rangeland health per the Central California Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health approved in June, 2001.

Results of this assessment and other assessments (cultural, botanical, etc.) were analyzed in an environmental assessment (EA) prepared in August, 2008 (EA CA-180-08-77). A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued for EA CA-180-08-77 on August 14, 2008.

### FIELD MANAGER'S PROPOSED DECISION

My proposed decision is to implement the proposed action described in EA CA-180-08-77 authorization of livestock grazing use on the Hunter Valley Allotment #3352 with a term of 10 years, February 28, 2008 to March 1, 2018. This proposed decision constitutes my Record of Decision for this EA.



Grazing will be authorized according to the following:

Allotment Name and #	Number	Kind	Period of Use	% Public Land	Amount of Use (AUMs)
Hunter Valley Allotment #3342	104	Cow	2/01 – 5/31	100	408

The following terms and conditions for this authorization are made part of your permit.

- Comply with the Central California Standards & Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management on all allotments.
- There is cultural resource damage occurring, partly from off highway vehicle use and camping near the Governor/Live Oak Mine prehistoric site on the Hunter Valley allotment. Grazing use is also negatively affecting the site. Fencing to exclude cattle from the site will be installed in the immediate vicinity of the site. The road to the prehistoric site will be closed using a backhoe to remove a small portion of the road above the Live Oak and Governor Mine.

#### RATIONALE

This proposed decision is necessary to authorize issuance of a ten year grazing permit in accordance with the grazing regulations of 43 CFR 4100 and be consistent with the Taylor Grazing Act, Public Rangelands Improvement Act and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

This allotment has had a Rangeland Health Assessment conducted, which indicates that the soils, riparian/wetland, species, and water quality standards for rangeland health are being met. An EA has been completed which indicates that there are no significant environmental impacts from the proposed grazing use.

I have determined that the terms and conditions for authorizing grazing on the Hunter Valley allotment are appropriate to achieve management and resource objectives according to the Sierra RMP and S&Gs.

#### AUTHORITY

The authority for this decision includes but is not limited to:

43CFR 4130.2 (a): “Grazing permits or leases shall be issued to qualified applicants to authorize use on the public lands and other lands under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management that are designated as available for livestock grazing through land use plans. Permits or leases shall specify the types and levels of use authorized, including livestock grazing, suspended use and conservation use. These grazing permits and leases shall also specify terms and conditions pursuant to 4130.3, 4130.3-1 and 4130.3-2.”

43 CFR 4130.2 (f): “the authorized officer will not offer, grant, or renew grazing permits or leases when the applicant, including permittees or lessees seeking renewal, refuse to accept the proposed terms and conditions of a permit or lease.”

43 CFR 4130.3: “Livestock grazing permits and leases contain terms and conditions

determined by the authorized officer to be appropriate to achieve management and resource condition objectives for the public lands and other lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, and to ensure conformance with the provisions of subpart 4180 of this part.”

### ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES

If you wish to protest this proposed decision, you must do so in accordance with 43 CFR 4160.2. Any applicant, permittee, lessee or other interested public may protest the proposed decision under 4160.1 of this title in person or in writing to the Folsom Field Office Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Folsom Field Office, 63 Natoma Street, Folsom, CA 95630 within 15 days after receipt of such decision. Protests should clearly and concisely state the reason(s) the proposed decision is in error.

In the absence of a protest, the proposed decision will become the final decision of the authorized officer without further notice unless otherwise provided in the proposed decision. Should this proposed decision become the final decision, and you or other individuals believe that you are adversely affected by this final decision, you may file an appeal of this grazing decision for the purpose of a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21, 4.470, and Subpart 4160.4. You may also petition for a stay of the decision in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21, pending final determination on appeal. The appeal and petition for stay must be filed with the Folsom Field Office Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Folsom Field Office, 63 Natoma Street, Folsom, CA 95630 within 30 days after receipt of the final decision.

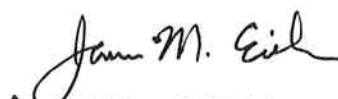
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Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied;
- (2) the likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits;
- (3) the likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted; and
- (4) whether the public interest favors granting a stay.

Sincerely,

  
for William S. Haigh  
Field Manager



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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Whittle Ranch Inc.

### NOTICE OF FIELD MANAGER'S PROPOSED GRAZING DECISION

Dear Mr. Whittle,

#### INTRODUCTION

The current grazing permit (Operator Number 4183) for the Whittle Allotment (4183) expires February 28, 2009. The lease is being renewed for a 10-year period (2008-2019). The Whittle Allotment consists of approximately 400 acres (100% BLM public lands), located just Southwest of New Melones Reservoir in Calaveras County, California. The current grazing permit authorizes 8 cows year-round for a total of 96 animal unit months (AUMs) for the Whittle Allotment.

#### BACKGROUND

A rangeland health assessment was conducted June 12, 2008. A subsequent determination was made that the allotment was meeting the soils, species, riparian/wetland, and water quality standards for rangeland health per the Central California Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health approved in June, 2001.

Results of this assessment and other assessments (cultural, botanical, etc.) were analyzed in an environmental assessment (EA) prepared in August, 2008 (EA CA-180-08-77). A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued for EA CA-180-08-77 on August 14, 2008.

#### FIELD MANAGER'S PROPOSED DECISION

My proposed decision is to implement the proposed action described in EA CA-180-08-77 authorization of livestock grazing use on the Whittle Allotment #4183 with a term of 10 years, February 28, 2008 to March 1, 2018. This proposed decision constitutes my Record of Decision for this EA.



Grazing will be authorized according to the following:

Allotment Name and #	Number	Kind	Period of Use	%Public Land	Amount of Use (AUMs)
Whittle allotment #4183	8	Cow	3/01 – 2/28	100	96

The following terms and conditions for this authorization are made part of your permit.

- Comply with the Central California Standards & Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management on all allotments.

#### RATIONALE

This proposed decision is necessary to authorize issuance of a ten year grazing permit in accordance with the grazing regulations of 43 CFR 4100 and be consistent with the Taylor Grazing Act, Public Rangelands Improvement Act and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

This allotment has had a Rangeland Health Assessment conducted, which indicates that the soils, riparian/wetland, species, and water quality standards for rangeland health are being met. An EA has been completed which indicates that there are no significant environmental impacts from the proposed grazing use.

I have determined that the terms and conditions for authorizing grazing on the Whittle allotment are appropriate to achieve management and resource objectives according to the Sierra RMP and S&Gs.

#### AUTHORITY

The authority for this decision includes but is not limited to:

43CFR 4130.2 (a): “Grazing permits or leases shall be issued to qualified applicants to authorize use on the public lands and other lands under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management that are designated as available for livestock grazing through land use plans. Permits or leases shall specify the types and levels of use authorized, including livestock grazing, suspended use and conservation use. These grazing permits and leases shall also specify terms and conditions pursuant to 4130.3, 4130.3-1 and 4130.3-2.”

43 CFR 4130.2 (f): “the authorized officer will not offer, grant, or renew grazing permits or leases when the applicant, including permittees or lessees seeking renewal, refuse to accept the proposed terms and conditions of a permit or lease.”

43 CFR 4130.3: “Livestock grazing permits and leases contain terms and conditions determined by the authorized officer to be appropriate to achieve management and resource condition objectives for the public lands and other lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, and to ensure conformance with the provisions of subpart 4180 of this part.”

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES

If you wish to protest this proposed decision, you must do so in accordance with 43 CFR 4160.2. Any applicant, permittee, lessee or other interested public may protest the proposed decision under 4160.1



of this title in person or in writing to the Folsom Field Office Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Folsom Field Office, 63 Natoma Street, Folsom, CA 95630 within 15 days after receipt of such decision. Protests should clearly and concisely state the reason(s) the proposed decision is in error.

In the absence of a protest, the proposed decision will become the final decision of the authorized officer without further notice unless otherwise provided in the proposed decision. Should this proposed decision become the final decision, and you or other individuals believe that you are adversely affected by this final decision, you may file an appeal of this grazing decision for the purpose of a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21, 4.470, and Subpart 4160.4. You may also petition for a stay of the decision in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21, pending final determination on appeal. The appeal and petition for stay must be filed with the Folsom Field Office Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Folsom Field Office, 63 Natoma Street, Folsom, CA 95630 within 30 days after receipt of the final decision.

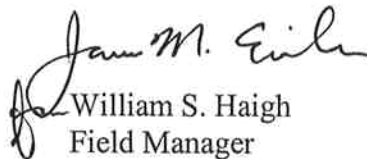
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#### Standards for Obtaining a Stay

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied;
- (2) the likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits;
- (3) the likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted; and
- (4) whether the public interest favors granting a stay.

Sincerely,

  
William S. Haigh  
Field Manager

# **United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management**

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**Environmental Assessment CA-180-08-77**

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## **Finding of No Significant Impact**

**Hunter Valley, Whittle, and Wooster Livestock Grazing Authorizations**

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Folsom Field Office  
63 Natoma Street  
Folsom, CA 95628  
Phone: (916) 985-4474  
FAX: (916) 985-3259

**August 2008**

## Finding of No Significant Impact Folsom Field Office

### FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT DETERMINATION:

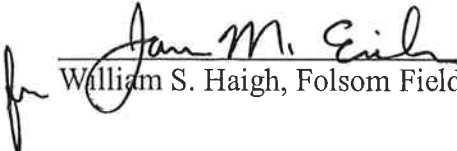
Based upon a review of the EA and the supporting documents, I find that the project is not a major federal action, and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. No environmental effects meet the definition of significance in context or intensity as defined in 40 CFR 1508.27 and do not exceed those effects described in the Sierra RMP. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed. This finding is based on the context and intensity of the project as described:

**Context:** The project is a site-specific action cumulatively (all 3 allotments), directly involving approximately 8,400 acres of BLM administered land that by itself does not have international, national, regional, or state-wide importance.

**Intensity:** The following discussion is organized around the Ten Significance Criteria described in 40 CFR 1508.27 and incorporated into BLM's Critical Elements of the Human Environment list (H-1790-1), and supplemental Instruction Memorandum, Acts, regulations and Executive Orders. The following have been considered in evaluating intensity for this proposal:

1. **Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse.** The proposed action would impact resources as described in the EA. Mitigating measures to reduce impacts to cultural resources on the Hunter Valley allotment were incorporated in the design of the action alternatives. None of the environmental effects discussed in detail in the EA and associated appendices are considered significant, nor do the effects exceed those described in the Sierra RMP FEIS.
2. **The degree to which the selected alternative will affect public health or safety.** No health and safety issues are associated with the proposed action.
3. **Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.** The historic and cultural resources of the proposed lease areas have been analyzed. Some of these resources could be historically significant but they are not considered unique. They will not be negatively affected by the lease renewal if the terms and conditions of the lease are followed. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern; park lands; prime farmlands; wetlands; wild and scenic Rivers; wilderness areas would not be affected.
4. **The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.** There is no scientific controversy over the nature of the impacts.
5. **The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.** The project is not unique or unusual. The BLM has experience implementing similar actions in similar areas. The environmental effects to the human environment are fully analyzed in the EA. There are no predicted effects on the human environment that are considered to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

6. **The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.** The actions considered in the selected alternative were considered by the interdisciplinary team within the context of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. A complete analysis of the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the selected alternative and all other alternatives is described in Chapter 3 of the EA.
7. **Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts – which include connected actions regardless of land ownership.** The interdisciplinary team evaluated the possible actions in context of past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions. Because no site specific adverse impacts are expected for any resources, cumulative impacts at the larger, watershed scale are not anticipated.
8. **The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.** The project, which includes road closure to and protective fencing of a cultural site on the Hunter Valley allotment from livestock damage, will not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor will it cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources. A cultural inventory has been completed for the proposed action, and consultation with SHPO has been completed in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). A finding of “no effect” on cultural resources completes BLM’s obligations under Section 106 of the NHPA, pursuant to the statewide Protocol Agreement (2007) between BLM California and the State Historic Preservation Officer. These reports are on file with BLM.
9. **The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, or the degree to which the action may adversely affect: 1) a proposed to be listed endangered or threatened species or its habitat, or 2) a species on BLM’s sensitive species list.** Although, elderberry bushes, potential host plant for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle, occur on the Whittle and Hunter Valley allotments, there is no evidence that these bushes are being grazed. Therefore, the proposed action is not anticipated to affect endangered or threatened species or their habitat.
10. **Whether the action threatens a violation of a federal, state, local, or tribal law, regulation or policy imposed for the protection of the environment, where non-federal requirements are consistent with federal requirements.** The project does not violate any known federal, state, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. State, local, and tribal interests were given the opportunity to participate in the environmental analysis process. Furthermore, letters were sent to five Native American tribes concerning consulting party status, and there was no response from any of the tribes. In addition, the project is consistent with applicable land management plans, policies, and programs.

  
William S. Haigh, Folsom Field Manager

8/14/08  
Date

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
LIVESTOCK GRAZING AUTHORIZATION

EA # CA-180-08-77

Hunter Valley  
Whittle  
Wooster

Folsom Field Office  
August 2008

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Assessment (EA) is prepared to disclose and analyze the environmental consequences of re-authorizing a livestock grazing permit/lease for 10-years as proposed on the Hunter Valley, Wooster, and Whittle Allotments. The EA is a site-specific analysis of potential impacts that could result with the implementation of one of the alternatives. The EA assists the BLM in project planning and ensuring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and in compliance with other laws and policies affecting the alternatives. If the decision maker determines that this project has “significant” impacts following the analysis in the EA, then an EIS would be prepared for the project. If not, a grazing decision will be issued along with a FONSI statement, documenting the reasons why implementation of the selected alternative would not result in “significant” environmental impacts.

### Background

Name	Legal Description/ County	Acres	Type of Livestock	AUMs	Season of Use	Lease Expiration Date
Hunter Valley	See Figures 1 and 2. Mariposa County	7911	Cows	402	2/1 – 5/31	02/28/2009
Whittle	T1N, R13E, Section 5: NE1/4SE1/4, S1/2SW1/4, S1/2SW1/4 8: N1/2NE1/4, SE1/4NE1/4 9: SW1/4, S1/2NW1/4, NW1/4NW1/4. See Figure 3 and 4. Calaveras County	420	Cows	100	Year- round	02/28/2009
Wooster	T2N, R12E, Section 22: SE1/4SE1/4	40 – Sheep Ranch	Cows	9	4/1 – 6/30	02/28/2009
	T4N, R14E, Sections 17 and 18: See Figure 5, 6 and 7 Calaveras County	40 – Black Creek	Cows	6	1/1 – 6/30	

### Purpose and Need for the Action

The purpose of the action is to consider whether to authorize grazing on the Hunter Valley, Wooster, and Whittle allotments. If authorized, grazing would be in accordance with 43 CFR 4100 and consistent with the provisions of the Taylor Grazing Act, Public Rangelands Improvement Act, and Federal Land Policy and Management Act. The purpose of the action is also to ensure that all authorizations implement provisions of, and is in conformance with, the Sierra Resource Management Plan (February 2008), and is in conformance with the Secretary Approved Rangeland Health Standards.

The action is needed to respond to a replacement of appropriation act permits.

### **Scoping and Issues**

The proposed action underwent internal, interdisciplinary scoping. One issue surfaced regarding livestock damage to a cultural resource on the Hunter Valley allotment.

### **Prevention of Unnecessary or Undue Degradation**

In addition to the management prescriptions discussed in this EA, including all terms and conditions, BLM may use its authority to close an area of the allotment to grazing use or take other measures to protect resources at any time, if needed. Therefore, issuance of a grazing lease with appropriate terms and conditions is consistent with BLM's responsibility to manage the public's use, occupancy, and development of the public lands and prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the lands. (43 USC 1732(b)).

### **Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, and Plans**

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) requires federal agencies to complete formal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for any action that "may affect" federally listed species or critical habitat. The ESA also requires federal agencies to use their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of endangered and threatened species.

In August 2004, the State Director, California Bureau of Land Management and the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) addressed the issue of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 compliance procedures for processing grazing permit lease renewals for livestock as defined in 43 CFR 4100.0-5. The State Director and the SHPO amended the 2004 State Protocol Agreement Between California Bureau of Land Management and The California State Historic Preservation Officer with the 2004 Grazing Amendment, Supplemental Procedures for Livestock Grazing Permit/Lease Renewal. This amendment was carried forward under the 2007 Protocol Agreement. The amendment allows for the renewal of existing grazing permits prior to completing all NHPA compliance needs as long as the 2007 Protocol Agreement direction, the BLM 8100 Series Manual Guidelines, and specific amendment direction for planning, inventory methodology, tribal and interested party consultation, evaluation, effect, treatment, and monitoring stipulations are followed. The BLM's Folsom Field Office has elected not to use the grazing amendment. The Folsom Field Office does follow the 2007 Protocol Agreement and other applicable policies in meeting its Section 106 obligations for grazing permit lease renewals.

### **Plan Conformance**

#### **Determination:**

The proposed action is in conformance with the Sierra Resource Management Plan (RMP), approved in February, 2008, and as further amended for Central Cal Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing.

#### **Rationale:**

The proposed action would occur in an area identified as available for livestock grazing in the Resource Management Plan. The proposed action is consistent with the land use decisions and resource management goals and objectives of the plan, as described in the RMP on pages 2.43-2.45. The key decisions, goals, and objectives include: manage livestock to achieve the four fundamentals

of rangeland health; change authorized grazing preference and/or season of use to meet or make progress toward meeting standards established by the Central California Standards and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing.

## Rangeland Health

The allotments do meet the Secretary of the Interior Approved Rangeland Health Standards as follows:

Rangeland Health Standard	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Livestock are the causal factor for not meeting Yes or No	Remarks (locations, etc.)
Soil	Yes for all			
Species	Yes for all			
Riparian	Yes for all			
Water quality	Yes for all			

Allotment Name	Date of Assessment	Date of Determination
Hunter Valley	7/14/2008	8/6/2008
Whittle	6/12/2008	8/12/2008
Wooster	9/13/2004	7/3/2008

## CHAPTER 2: PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

### Alternative 1 – Proposed Action

This proposed action is to authorize grazing on the Hunter Valley, Wooster, and Whittle allotments with applicable provisions as discussed further in this section. Terms and conditions, range improvements, and monitoring requirements are as follows:

#### A. Mandatory Terms and Conditions

Allotment	Number of Livestock	Kind	From	To	AUMs
Hunter Valley	Actual use schedule so varies.	cows	2/1	5/31	402
Whittle	8	cows	3/1	2/28	100
Wooster – Sheep Ranch	3	cows	4/1	6/30	9
Wooster – Copperopolis	1	cow	1/1	6/30	6

#### Range Improvements

There is cultural resource damage occurring, partly from off highway vehicle use and camping at a prehistoric site on the Hunter Valley allotment. Grazing use is also negatively affecting the site. Fencing to exclude cattle from the site will be installed in the immediate vicinity of the site. The road



to the prehistoric site will be closed using a backhoe to remove a small portion of the road above the site.

### **Alternative 2 – Current Management (No Action)**

A 10-year permit would be issued with the same terms and conditions as the soon-to-be expired and proposed authorizations (see table above). This alternative differs from the proposed alternative only in that Alternative 2 would not include the range improvement proposed in Alternative 1.

### **Alternative 3 - No Grazing**

This alternative would cancel the permit on the Hunter Valley, Whittle, and Wooster Allotments. As a result, grazing would not be authorized on these allotments. Under this alternative, BLM would initiate the process in accordance with the 43 CFR parts 4100 and 1600 to eliminate grazing on the allotment and amend the resource management plan.

### **Current Livestock Management**

Hunter Valley – The Hunter Valley allotment is reported on an actual use basis. The rancher reports that he has put cows on as late as March or April because the feed is too short, and has stayed on as late as July. Generally, he puts a few cows on early so the feed can get established, then he puts on more cows when the feed is best, reducing the number as the feed gets shorter.

Whittle – Whittle Ranch leases adjacent private property in association with the BLM allotment. The Whittle's put their cows on the private allotment during the spring, and the cows drift onto the BLM allotment during this time. There is a fence separating the private lease from the BLM allotment. Generally, the private lease offers greater foraging opportunities for the livestock than the BLM allotment. The riparian area along Bean Gulch, which provides water and adequate forage, receives the majority of cattle use on the BLM allotment. This use, though evident, is minimal.

Wooster – A significant portion of the allotment was involved in a land exchange and became private property. The remaining parcels are near Sheep Ranch (40 acres) and near Copperopolis (40 acres). The only portion of the Sheep Ranch parcel that the Woosters are using is located on the west side of Big Hill Road where corrals have been built. The total area of this parcel being used is approximately 10 acres. There have been up to 25 heifers using the Sheep Ranch parcel at any given time. The Copperopolis parcel is not fenced and the cattle drift from the private ranch into this parcel.

## **CHAPTER 3: ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

The following supplemental authorities are not relevant to this project because related resources or conditions are not present: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC); essential fish habitat; prime or unique farmlands; floodplains; Native American cultural values; Wild and Scenic Rivers; wilderness; wild horse and burro herds; solid or hazardous wastes; or environmental justice.

### **Air Quality**

#### Affected Environment

The project areas are in the Mountain Counties Air Basin in an area classified as federal non-attainment for ozone under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards

([www.arb.ca.gov/desig/adm.htm](http://www.arb.ca.gov/desig/adm.htm)). A state implementation plan (SIP) for California identifies sources of emissions which include motor vehicles, consumer products, and pesticides ([www.arb.ca.gov/planning/sip/94sip/sipvol1.htm](http://www.arb.ca.gov/planning/sip/94sip/sipvol1.htm)). The SIP also includes control measures to reduce emissions.

### Impacts of all Alternatives

The small livestock operations and slight vehicle use would not affect air quality. Cancellation of these small leases similarly would not affect air quality.

## **Cultural Resources**

### Affected Environment

A BLM archaeologist conducted studies to determine whether significant cultural resources would be affected by the proposed lease renewals. The studies involved background records search, field inventories, and Native American consultations. The results of the studies are presented below by allotment.

0403352 – Hunter Valley – The proposed allotment is vast, covering thousands of acres, so analysis focused on identifying significant cultural resources in areas of the allotment where conflicts are most likely to occur: those portions of the allotment where cultural resource sensitivity is high and cattle use is most intense. Four cultural resources were identified in the allotment:

- TM-272 consists of a prehistoric site
- TM-277 consists of the Governor/Live Oak Mine
- TM-344 consists of the Iron Duke Mine
- Williams Peak Fire Lookout

0404183 – Whittle – Three cultural resources were identified in the allotment.

- Cal-S-323 consists of a prehistoric site
- Cal-S-324 consists of historic-era rock walls, building foundations, artifacts, etc.
- Cal-S-426 consists of chromite mine prospects

0404187 – Wooster – Three cultural resources were identified in the allotment:

- AC-265 consists of a rock and concrete dam, with an associated road and pipeline.
- AC-266 consists of a ditch.
- AC-267 consists of an apparent historic-era complex including a rock and concrete dam, two mine prospects, a rock-lined dirt road, concrete foundations, and scattered ranch junk.

Native American tribes were contacted to determine whether they would like to comment on the proposed lease renewals. At the time that this EA was being prepared, BLM had not received a response. No places of Native American religious or cultural significance have been identified within the allotments, and BLM believes that the lease renewals would not affect such places or Native American traditional religious and cultural values.

### Impacts of Proposed Action

0403352 – Hunter Valley – TM-272, a prehistoric site, is being negatively affected by current grazing use, as well as recreational use (i.e., motorized vehicle use, campfires, and shooting/littering). The

proposed fencing and road closure will eliminate the grazing impacts to this site. None of the other cultural resources are being negatively affected or would be negatively affected by the lease renewal.

0404183 – Whittle – There is evidence of cattle use in the area but the cultural resources, including Cal-S-323, are not being negatively affected and would continue to not be affected under the new grazing lease. No new grazing facilities like corrals or water troughs are proposed. The level of proposed grazing is very low. Given the rugged terrain, brush, and generally low cultural resource sensitivity of the rest of the lease area, it is unlikely that the proposed grazing activity would negatively affect any yet-to-be-discovered cultural resources.

0404187 – Wooster – There is evidence of intensive cattle use in and around the three cultural resources. However, the cultural resources are not being negatively affected by the use. The proposed grazing activity would not negatively affect the cultural resources.

#### Impacts of Current Management (no action)

0403352 – Hunter Valley – TM-272, the prehistoric site at the Live Oak and Governor Mine, is being negatively affected by grazing use as well as recreational use (i.e., motorized vehicle use, campfires, and shooting/littering). The grazing impacts would continue to occur to this site under current management. None of the other properties are being negatively affected or would be negatively affected by the lease renewal.

0404183 – Whittle – Same as proposed grazing.

0404187 – Wooster – Same as proposed grazing.

#### Impacts of the No Grazing Alternative

Elimination of grazing on these allotments would not affect cultural resources.

#### References

Barnes, J. 2008. Section 106 compliance for the Whittle grazing lease renewal, Calaveras County. Memorandum to the Field Manager. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Folsom, California. 33 pp.

Barnes, J. 2008. Section 106 compliance for the Hunter Valley Mountain grazing lease renewal, Mariposa County. Memorandum to the Field Manager. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Folsom, California. 44 pp.

Barnes, J. 2008. Section 106 compliance for the Wooster grazing lease renewal, Calaveras County. Memorandum to the Field Manager. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Folsom, California. 28 pp.

#### **Invasive, Non-native Species**

##### Affected Environment

Hunter Valley – 3352 – Weed species present on the allotment include Italian thistle, yellow starthistle, tocalote, bulbous bluegrass, cocklebur. The allotment is meeting the species standard for rangeland health.

Whittle – 4183 – The Bean Gulch riparian area and surrounding uplands has the following weed species present (goat grass, medusa head, Italian thistle, tocalote, and milk thistle). Although present, weeds are not considered to be at significant levels. The allotment is meeting the species standard for rangeland health.

Wooster – 4187 – Weed species present on the Copperopolis parcel include edible fig in the riparian area, and Italian thistle. Weed species present on the Sheep Ranch parcel include Italian thistle and French broom. There is a large stand of tree-of-heaven just south of the public land. The adjacent public land should be monitored to prevent the spread of this species.

#### Impacts of the Proposed Action

Although invasive weed species are present on all of the allotments, they do not appear to be significantly impacting the abundance or cover of native species. Cattle can spread weed seed through their scat and on their hair. The low level of grazing occurring on these allotments does not appear to be significantly affecting the spread of invasive weeds.

#### Impacts of Current Management

Impacts of current management are the same as for the proposed action.

#### Impacts of No Grazing

Under the no grazing alternative, the potential for dispersal of seeds through livestock hairs and scat would decrease throughout the allotments. Because current, low levels of grazing do not appear to be significantly affecting weed spread, elimination of grazing would not be expected to noticeably reduce invasive species on the allotments.

#### References

Franklin, A. 2008. Botanical Resource Inventory Report (Hunter Valley grazing lease renewal). Unpubl. rep. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Folsom, California. 3 pp.

Franklin, A. 2008. Botanical Resource Inventory Report (Whittle grazing lease renewal). Unpubl. rep. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Folsom, California. 1 p.

Franklin, A. 2008. Botanical Resource Inventory Report (Wooster grazing lease renewal). Unpubl. rep. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Folsom, California. 2 pp.

U.S. Bureau of Land Management. 2008. Grazing Use Management/Rangeland Health Assessment for the Whittle allotment. Folsom, CA. 2 pp.

#### **Recreation**

##### Affected Environment

Very little or no recreation is occurring on the Wooster and Whittle allotments, which are largely isolated from the general public. Vehicular access is through private property. The public can drive through the Hunter Valley allotment via the Hunter Valley Access Road. The Hunter Valley Allotment does receive dispersed recreational use such as hunting, target shooting, off-road vehicle,

hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking.

### Impacts of the Proposed Action and Current Management

The primary impact of grazing on recreation opportunities will be the presence of domestic livestock and the livestock operator in the area during the grazing season. Due to limited access and types of potential recreation, which would not necessarily conflict with grazing, the proposed action would not likely impact recreational opportunities. The road closure to help prevent further negative effect to cultural resources in the allotment would have a negligible impact on off-road vehicle use, which is prohibited off of the Hunter Valley Mountain access road under the Sierra RMP. The impacts of the road closure were analyzed in the Sierra RMP FEIS.

### Impacts of No Grazing

Due to limited access, elimination of already low/no impact grazing is not expected to affect recreation in the allotment.

### **Social and Economic Values**

Due to the size and nature of these allotments, it is expected that the lessees employ few if any individuals in the community. Livestock grazing on the scale of these allotments contribute little socio-economic value to the community. Socio-economic impacts of the proposed action are insignificant.

### **Soils**

#### Affected Environment

Hunter Valley – 040332 – The geology of the ridges is mapped as Mesozoic volcanic and metavolcanic rocks. Hunter Valley itself is mapped as Jurassic marine sedimentary and metasedimentary rocks. Soil units mapped include Auburn loam, 2% to 15% slopes; Auburn loam, 15% to 30% slopes, eroded; Auburn stony loam, 30% to 50% slopes; Auburn rocky loam, 30 to 75% slopes; severely eroded; Auburn very rocky loam, 30% to 75% slopes, eroded; Blasingame loam, 2% to 15% slopes; Blasingame rocky loam, 15% to 50% slopes; Blasingame-Las Posas stony loams, 9% to 30%, eroded; Blasingame-Las Posas extremely rocky loams, 30% to 75% slopes, eroded; Daulton loam, 15% to 30% slopes; Loamy alluvial land; Maymen gravelly loam, 30% to 75% slopes, severely eroded; Maymen gravelly loam, over 75% slopes, eroded; Rock land; Trabuco clay loam, 2% to 30% slopes, eroded; Trabuco very rocky clay loam, 15 to 50% slopes, eroded. Auburn and Maymen series soils, and the unit designated “Rock land” (mostly ridge top) predominate. The allotment is currently meeting the soil standard for rangeland health. It has good ground cover with a residual dry matter of 700-1,000 lbs/acre and no evident erosion.

Whittle – 0404183 – Three soil associations are found on the subject land. The majority of the acreage, roughly that lying between Bean Gulch and French Creek, is comprised of the Delpiedra-Tancher association, which has serpentine parent material and very low to low fertility. Erosion hazard is slight to moderate if the vegetative cover is removed. The land northwest of Bean Gulch has soils of the Guenoc-Stonyford association, which has low to moderate fertility. The Auburn-Argonaut association is found west of French Creek. These soils also have low to moderate fertility. The entire area has a thin mantle of soil and a very stony surface. The allotment is currently meeting the soil standard for rangeland health. It has good ground cover with a residual dry matter of 700-1,000 lbs/acre and no

evident erosion.

Wooster – 0404187 – Granitic geology occurs in the allotment area according to the “Geologic Map of Calaveras County, California” compiled by Clark and Lydon. No county soil survey has been completed. The allotment is currently meeting the soil standard for rangeland health. It has good ground cover with a residual dry matter of 700-1,000 lbs/acre and no evident erosion.

#### Impacts of the Proposed Action and Current Management (no action) Alternatives

There is no evidence of erosion or compaction on any of the allotments. Therefore, livestock grazing does not appear to be impacting soils on these allotments. The proposed road closure to help prevent negative effects to cultural resources will have a negligible effect on soils.

#### Impacts of the No Grazing Alternative

Elimination of grazing will not affect soil productivity or stability.

### **Water Quality**

#### Affected Environment

The Hunter Valley allotment is in the Upper Merced River watershed. Surface runoff flows into Lake McClure Exchequer Reservoir and the Merced River. Several intermittent streams drain into the lake from the allotment.

The Whittle allotment is in the Upper Stanislaus River watershed. Surface runoff flows into the Stanislaus River and Tullock Reservoir. The allotment is drained by two intermittent streams that run from Northwest to Southeast on either side of the ridge. Bean Gulch drains the north side of the ridge and French Creek drains the south side. These two streams join about 1/8 mile off the public domain and flow south-east into the Stanislaus River, which runs approximately four miles south to Tullock Reservoir.

The Wooster allotment contains two parcels, one in the Upper Calaveras River watershed and the other in the Upper Stanislaus River Watershed. Surface runoff from the parcel near Sheep Ranch would likely flow into San Antonio Creek. There are no drainages on the Sheep Ranch parcel. The parcel near Copperopolis has ¼ mile of Black Creek running through it. This creek eventually reaches Tullock Reservoir several miles south of the allotment.

The Upper Merced, Upper Stanislaus and Upper Calaveras are not on the State 303d list for water quality impairment. Beneficial water uses identified in the basin plan for the area around the Wooster (Sheep Ranch parcel) allotment include recreation, freshwater habitat (warm and cold water ecosystems), migration of warm water fish, spawning habitat for warm water and cold water fish, and wildlife habitat. Beneficial water uses identified in the basin plan for the area around the Wooster (Copperopolis parcel) allotment, Hunter Valley allotment, and Whittle allotment include municipal and domestic supply, irrigation, stock watering, hydropower generation, recreation, freshwater habitat (warm and cold water ecosystems), and wildlife habitat. No water quality monitoring/inventory has taken place on any of the allotments.

#### Impacts of the Proposed Action and Current Management (no action)

Because the State has not identified these rivers as water quality impaired, further grazing at current levels are not expected to affect water quality or beneficial water uses. The proposed road closure to help prevent negative effects to cultural resources will not affect water quality.

#### Impacts from the No Grazing Alternative

Elimination of grazing is not expected to impact water quality on the allotments.

#### References

California Regional Water Quality Board, Central Valley Region. Revised 2007. The Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins.

#### **Wetlands/Riparian**

##### Affected Environment

0403342 – Hunter Valley – Approximately 7 miles of intermittent or perennial stream occur on the allotment. One and ¼ mile has been assessed, and was determined to be in proper functioning condition (7/30/1998 and 7/14/2008).

0404183 – Whittle – Approximately ¼ mile of Bean Gulch was assessed and determined to be in proper functioning condition. The associated spring area, although somewhat weedy, was determined to be in proper functioning condition. French Creek was dry and did not support riparian vegetation. It was determined that it was inappropriate for functioning condition assessment.

0404187 – Wooster – Approximately ¼ mile of Black Creek runs through the Copperopolis parcel of the Wooster allotment. The Sheep Ranch parcel contains no riparian habitat. Black Creek was visited and determined to be intermittent and not appropriate for functioning condition assessment. It supported two pool areas that had willows and sedge. Overall it was dry.

##### Impacts of the Proposed Action and Current Management (no action)

Cattle grazing is not having an impact on riparian habitat in these three allotments. The riparian areas that have been assessed are in proper functioning condition, and no livestock grazing impacts have been observed.

##### Impacts of the No Grazing Alternative

Elimination of grazing on these three allotments would not improve riparian condition on the allotments, since cattle are either not impacting or not using the riparian zone.

#### References

U.S. Bureau of Land Management. 2008. Grazing Use Management/Rangeland Health Assessment and Determination for the Whittle allotment. Folsom Field Office, Folsom, California. 2 pp.

U.S. Bureau of Land Management. 2008. Grazing Use Management/Rangeland Health Assessment and Determination for the Hunter Valley allotment. Folsom Field Office, Folsom, California. 2 pp.

U.S. Bureau of Land Management. 2008. Grazing Use Management/Rangeland Health Assessment and Determination for the Wooster allotment. Folsom Field Office, Folsom, California. 2 pp.

## **Wildlife**

0403352 – Hunter Valley – Wildlife habitat on the allotment includes mixed oak woodland, mixed chaparral, riparian, and chamise. Available forage is abundant, with no apparent competition between wildlife and livestock. The allotment is in the yearlong range of the Mariposa deer herd but is not considered a critical area for the herd. Surveys of the allotment indicate a diversity of typical, native wildlife species for the area, such as coyote, deer, California quail and several species of songbirds. The lands on the shore of Lake McClure may be important to raptors, such as the Bald Eagle. Several elderberry bushes occur on the allotment. Elderberry bushes provide habitat for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle, a federally threatened species. The elderberry bushes showed no evidence of grazing.

0404183 – Whittle – Several elderberry bushes were found on the allotment. These shrubs could host the federally threatened valley elderberry longhorn beetle. The elderberry bushes showed no evidence of grazing. Habitat on the allotment is largely chaparral/chamise. There are some patches of oak woodland and grassland with scattered gray pine. The spring and creek associated with Bean Gulch supported riparian vegetation such as willow, alder, and cattails. Available forage is abundant, with no apparent competition between wildlife and livestock. The allotment is within the yearlong range of the Placerville deer herd. A survey of the allotment indicated a diversity of typical, native wildlife species for the area, such as coyote, fox, deer, jackrabbit, wild turkey, California quail, several species of songbirds, Pacific treefrog, and bullfrog. The species standard for rangeland health is being achieved.

0404187 – Wooster – No special status species were found on the allotment. Wildlife habitat on the allotment was largely blue oak woodland with some live oak, valley oak, and bull pine. Steeper slopes had buckbursh and manzanita. Black Creek, an intermittent drainage, had some permanent pools that supported willow and sedges. The permanent pools were full of bullfrogs. Other wildlife evident on the allotment included deer, coyote, bobcat, western fence lizard, California quail, plain titmouse, acorn woodpecker, scrub jay, spotted towhee, and California roach. Available forage is abundant, with no apparent competition between wildlife and livestock. The Sheep Ranch parcel of the allotment is within the winter range of the Railroad Flat deer herd. The Copperopolis parcel of the allotment is within the yearlong range of the Placerville deer herd. The species standard for rangeland health is being met.

## Impacts of all Alternatives

Neither existing grazing nor elimination of grazing are expected to impact wildlife because grazing does not appear to be adversely affecting special status species known to occur on the allotments or their habitats.

## References

Cranston, P. 2004. Biological Resource Inventory Report, Wooster allotment. Unpubl. rep. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Folsom, California. 1 p.

Cranston, P. 2008. Biological Resource Inventory Report, Whittle allotment. Unpubl. rep. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Folsom, California. 1 p.



U.S. Bureau of Land Management. 1982. Proposed livestock grazing management for the Sierra Planning Area draft environmental impact statement. Bakersfield District Office, Bakersfield, California. 145 pp.

## **Vegetation**

Hunter Valley – 0403352 – Plant communities range from non-native annual grassland, to blue oak savannah/woodland to live oak woodland to mixed chaparral. There are many transitional zones with a mosaic of oaks, shrub patches and grassy openings. Among the varied woody species of the lease are gray pine, California juniper, blue oak, interior live oak, California buckeye, chamise, white leaf manzanita, mewukka manzanita, common Manzanita, buckbrush, toyon, red bud, holly-leaf redberry, western mountain mahogany, flowering ash, poison oak, pitcher sage, bush poppy, golden fleece, yerba santa, deer weed, gooseberry, and blue elderberry.

There are several occurrences of big scale balsamroot, *Balsamorhiza macrolepis macrolepis*, a BLM sensitive species. Stinkbells, *Fritillaria agrestis*, is also present in several areas of the lease. Stinkbells is tracked by the California Native Plant Society, but is not a BLM sensitive species.

Whittle – 0404183 – The ridgetop serpentine habitat was given priority in two surveys of the allotment. No special status species were found.

The central portion of the lease area is a serpentine ridge. This portion of the lease is dominated by chaparral, with chamise chaparral intermingling with a mixed chaparral of chamise, toyon, common Manzanita, buckbrush, holly-leaf redberry, shrub monkeyflower, with occasional gray pine and interior live oak. Lower elevationally and west of the ridge there is a transition to blue oak woodland/savannah. Here interior live oak is sometimes a codominant with blue oak. Other species present in this habitat include gray pine, poison oak, common Manzanita, buckbrush, chamise, keckiella, western mountain mahogany, and bush monkey flower.

Wooster – 0404187 – The Copperopolis parcel supports blue oak savannah/woodland transitioning to interior live oak woodland, and non-native annual grassland. The oak communities have other tree species and substantial shrub cover including black oak, gray pine, California buckeye, toyon, poison oak, buckbrush, holly-leaf redberry, keckiella, and bush monkeyflower. The riparian zone is surrounded by Himalayan blackberry, with valley oak, arroyo willow, and California wild grape. The Sheep Ranch parcel has Westside ponderosa pine forest transitioning to whiteleaf Manzanita chaparral and non-native annual grassland. Other woody species in the mix include gray pine, interior live oak, black oak, canyon live oak, black walnut, poison oak, buckbrush, and French broom.

No special status plant species were found on this allotment.

## **Impacts of the Proposed Action**

The species standard is being met on all of the allotments. Native vegetation is diverse and healthy. Grazing does not appear to be impacting vegetation on any of the allotments. Grazing is not impacting special status species on any of the allotments. Closure of a road in the allotment to help prevent further negative effects to cultural resources would have a long-term beneficial impact on vegetation in the area where motorized vehicles can no longer access. The road closure will prevent members of the public from driving off road in the closed area, which destroys understory vegetation. The BLM botanist has examined the area of the proposed closure and determined that no special status species would be affected.

## Impacts of Current Management

Same as for the Proposed Action.

## Impacts of no grazing:

Elimination of grazing is not expected to impact vegetation.

## References

Franklin, A. 2008. Botanical Resource Inventory Report, Hunter Valley Allotment. Unpubl. rep. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Folsom, California. 3 pp.

Franklin, A. 2008. Botanical Resource Inventory Report, Whittle Allotment. Unpubl. rep. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Folsom, California. 1 p.

Franklin, A. 2008. Botanical Resource Inventory Report, Wooster allotment. Unpubl. rep. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Folsom, California. 2 pp.

## **Cumulative Impacts**

Because no site specific adverse impacts are expected for any resources (described above), cumulative impacts at the larger, watershed scale are not anticipated. Impacts on recreation that could result from the road closure were analyzed in the Sierra RMP FEIS. These impacts are negligible. There are still plenty of other places in the allotment, watershed, and region to drive motorized vehicles and target shoot.

## **CHAPTER 4: CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION**

### **Persons, Groups, and Agencies Consulted**

- Calaveras Band of Miwok Indians
- California Valley Miwok Tribe
- American Indian Council of Mariposa County
- Tuolumne Me-Wuk Tribal Council
- Chicken Ranch Rancheria of Me-Wuk

### **Public Participation**

The EA will be available on BLM's website for a 15-day public review period. It will also be sent to the lessees and those identified as interested publics for these allotments.

### **List of Preparers and Reviewers**

- Peggy Cranston, Wildlife Biologist and Range Program Lead
- Al Franklin, Botanist
- James Barnes, Archaeologist and NEPA Coordinator

## 5.1 BLM Interdisciplinary Team

Reviewers:

James Bunn  
NEPA Reviewer/Cultural Resources

Albert Farnham  
Botany

Peggy Carston  
Wildlife

8/14/08

8/13/08

8/14/08

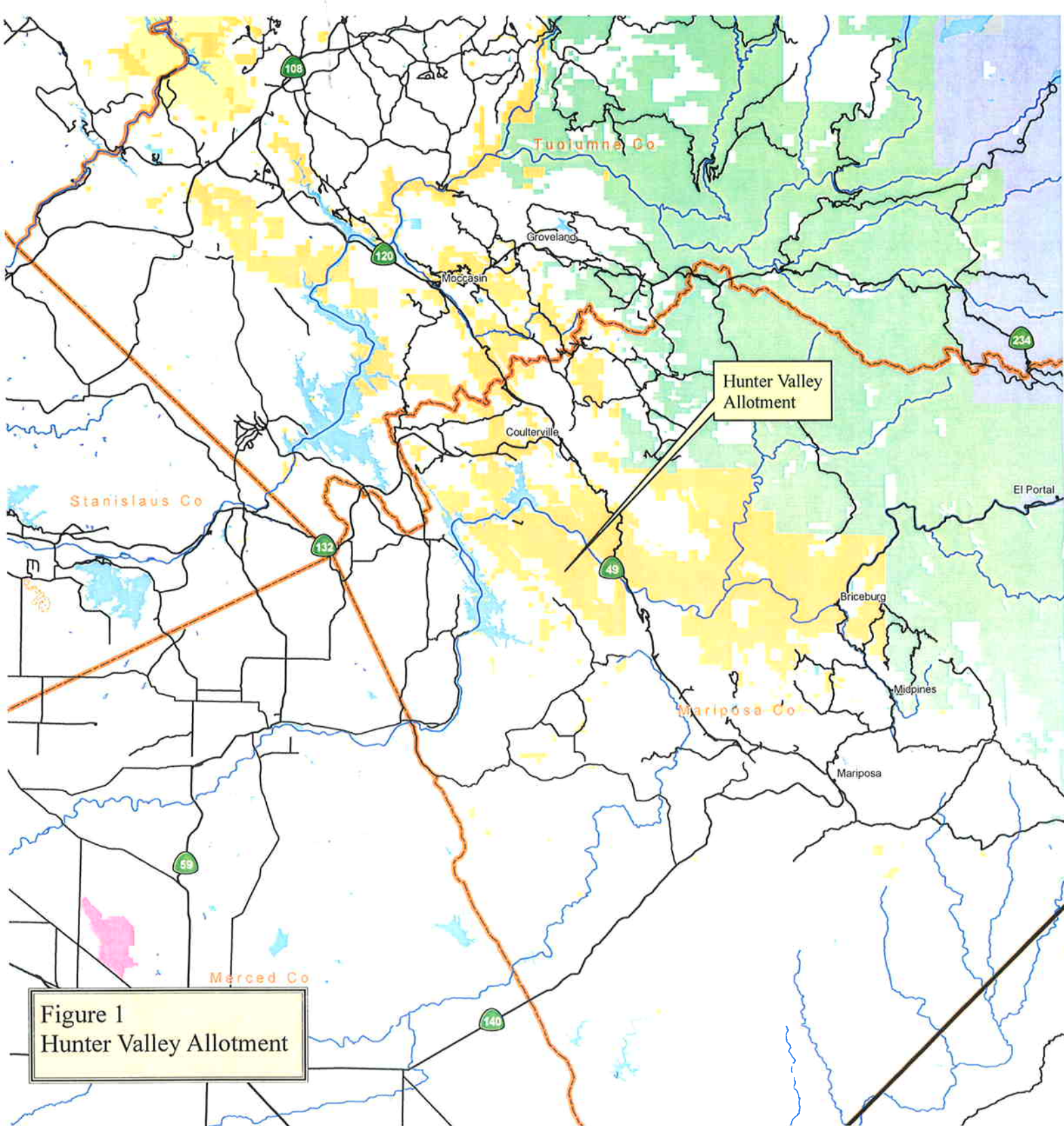


Figure 1  
Hunter Valley Allotment



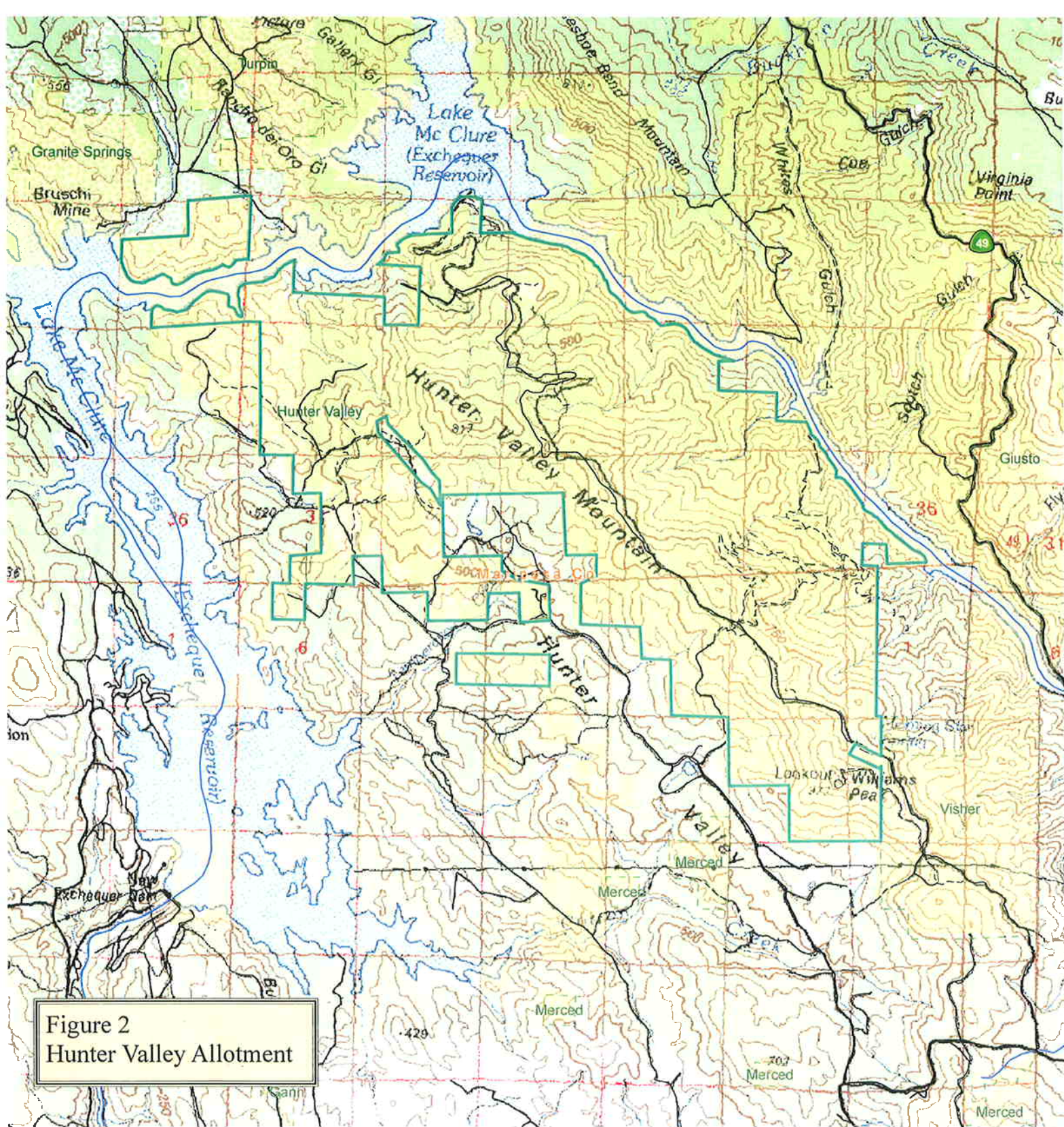
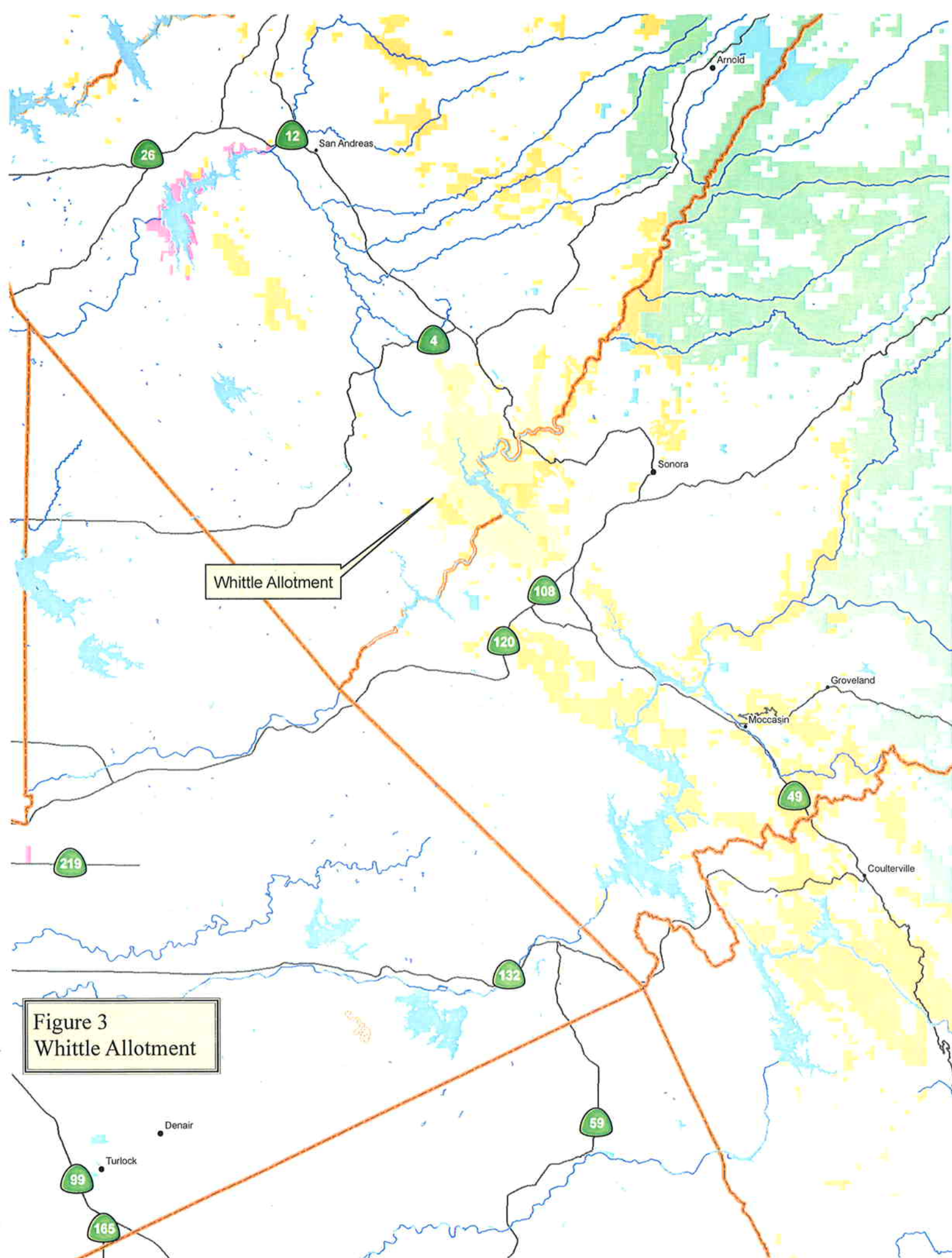
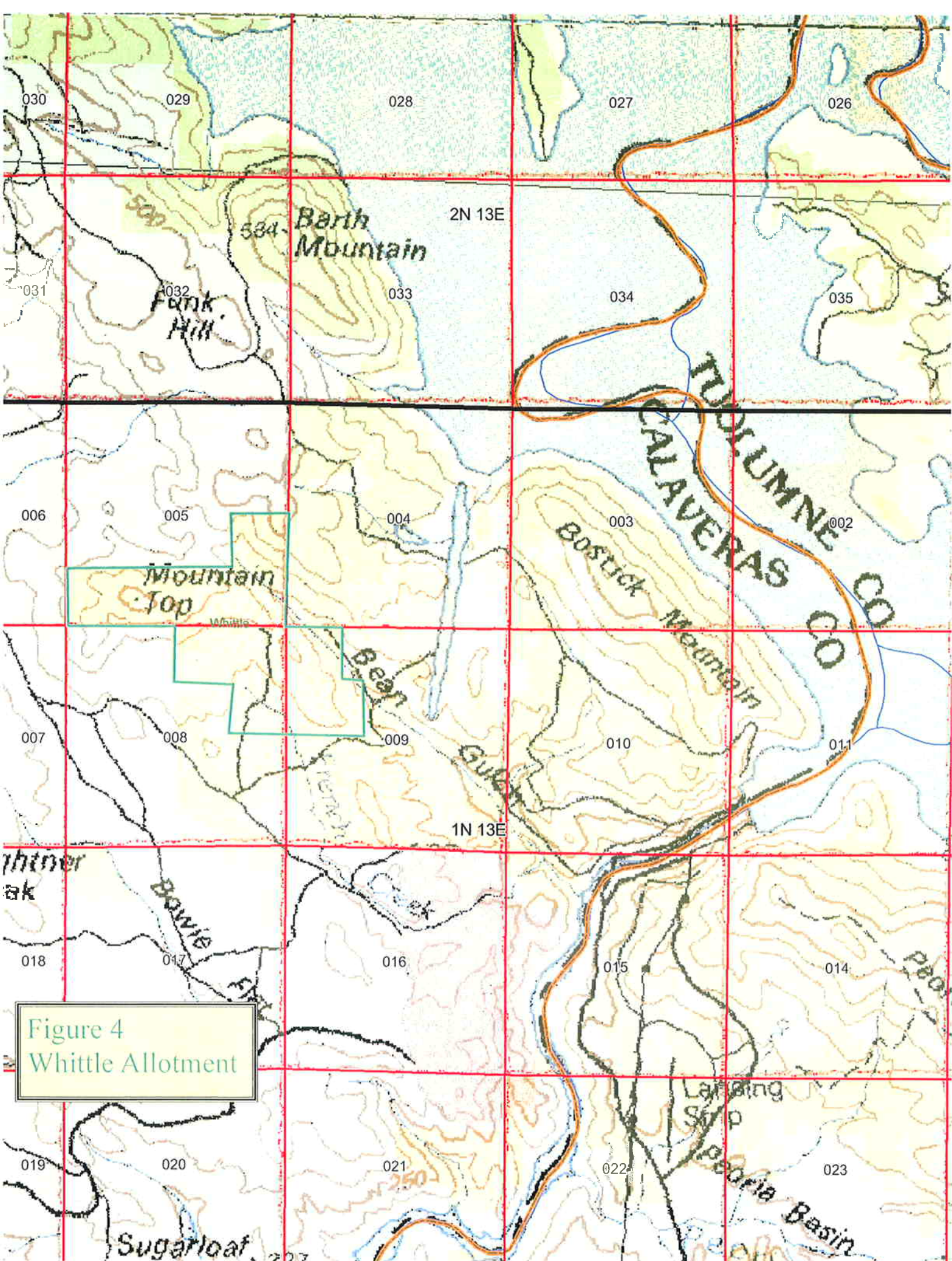


Figure 2  
Hunter Valley Allotment











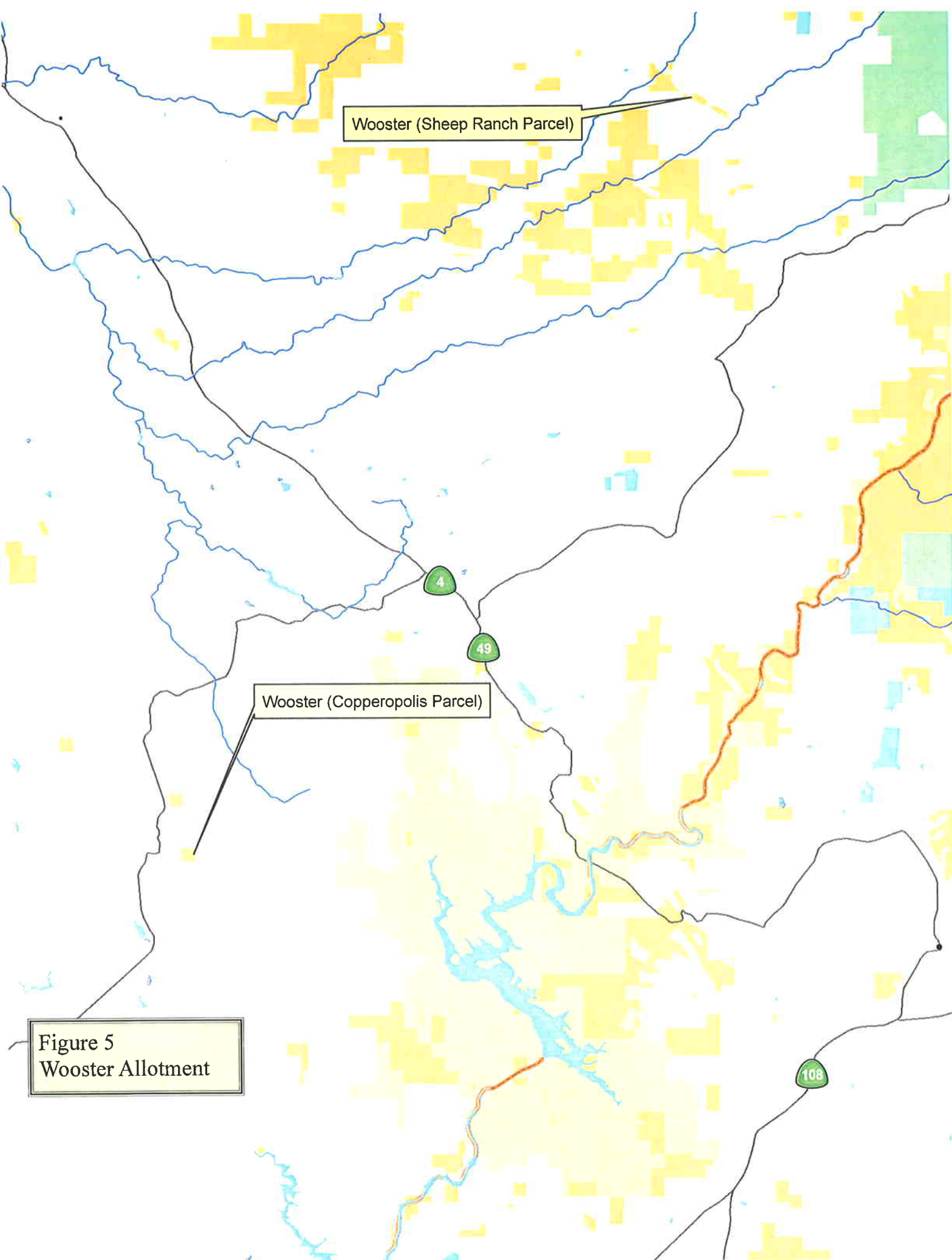


Figure 5  
Wooster Allotment



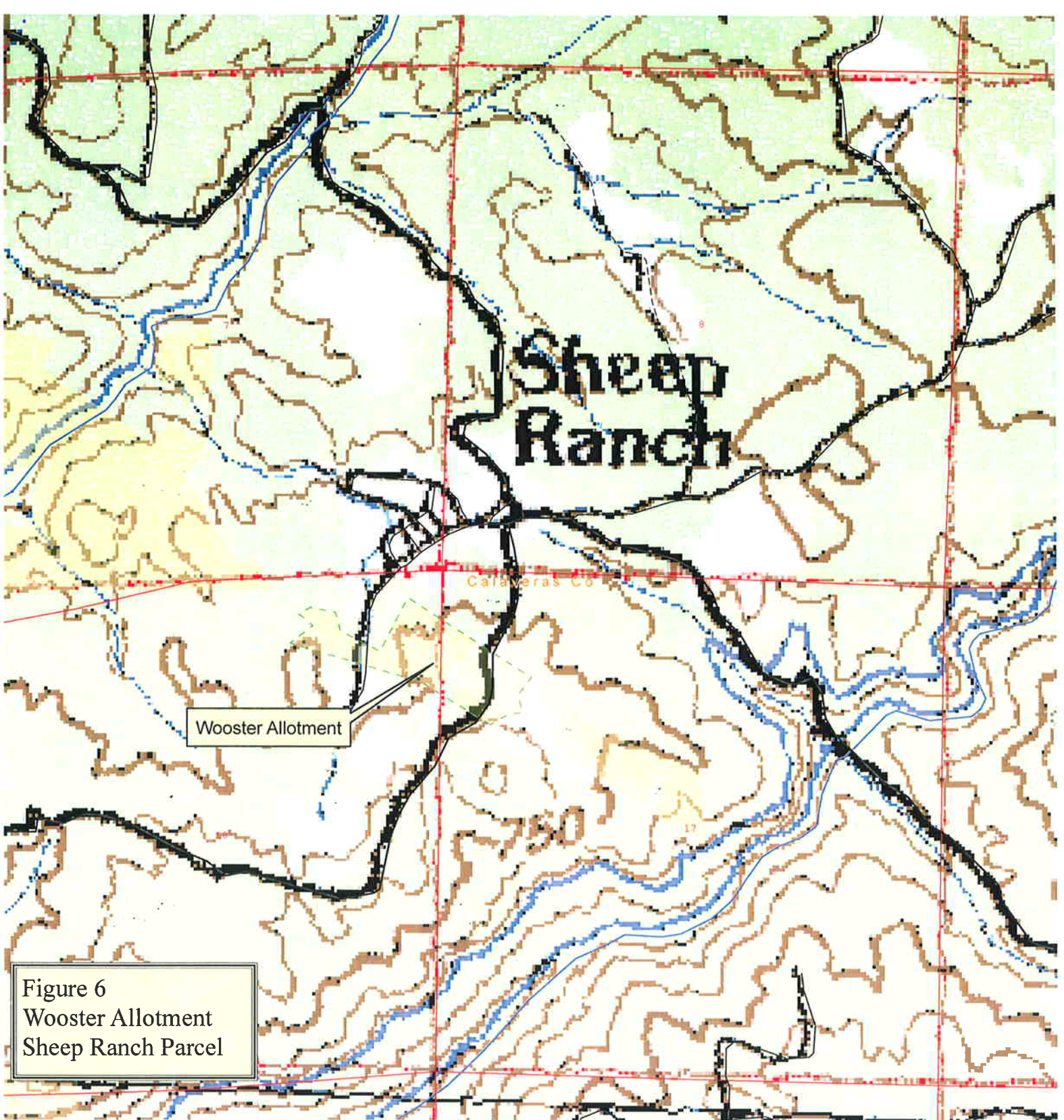


Figure 6  
Wooster Allotment  
Sheep Ranch Parcel



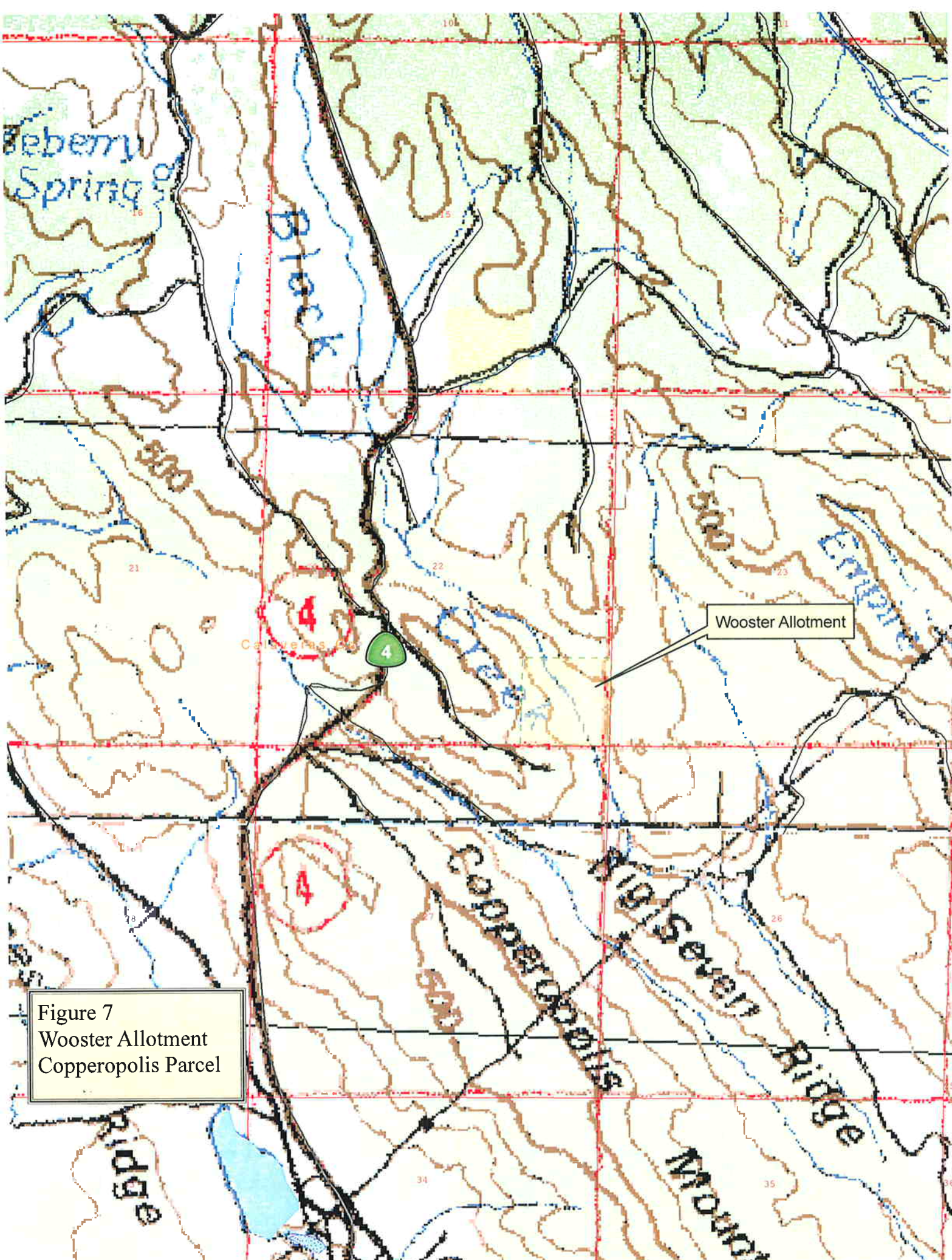


Figure 7  
Wooster Allotment  
Copperopolis Parcel

## Grazing Use Management/Rangeland Health Assessment

Allotment Number: 4210 Parcel Name: Hornitos and Coulterville Acres Observed: 200

Lessee: Bill McDonald Animals: Actual use so varies AUMs: 402 Season: 2/1-5/31

Current Lease Expiration Date: 2/3/2018

BLM Reviews: Field Visit – 07/14/08 – Peggy Cranston

The lessee is on an actual use schedule and submits his actual use at the end of the grazing season. The allotment has several range improvements including fencing, cattle guards, spring development and troughs, and reservoirs. The allotment consists of blue oak savannah, mixed oak woodland, riparian, and chamise. Areas with steep slopes appeared to be used less by cattle than flat areas. Extensive grazing was evident throughout allotment.

### Central California Standards

Soils: Soils exhibit functional biological and physical characteristics that are appropriate to soil type, climate, and land form.

RDM was between 500 – 750 pounds per acre. No soil erosion or compaction observed.

Meets standard.

Species: Healthy, productive, and diverse populations of native species, including special status species (Federal T&E, Federal proposed, Federal candidates, BLM sensitive, or Calif. State T&E) are maintained or enhanced where appropriate.

No noxious weeds present on the allotment. Several species of native plants present. Two special status plant species are present on the allotment, but appear not to be impacted by livestock grazing.

Meets standard.

Riparian: Riparian/wetland vegetation, structure and diversity and stream channels and floodplains are, or are making significant progress toward, functioning properly and achieving an advanced ecological status.

Intermittent stream was assessed in 1998 in Township 3S, Range 16 E, Section 21. In 2008, ¼ mile section of Temperance Creek was assessed. Both streams are considered properly functioning.

Meets standard.

Water quality: Surface and groundwater quality complies with California or other appropriate (e.g. Nevada or Tribal) water quality standards.

Meets standard.

Determination:

S&G determination is a 2. Category 2 are allotments where all standards are being met, or significant progress is being made toward meeting the standards.

Recommendations/Actions:

1. Continue lease as is. This allotment is heavily used and should be checked annually.

Concurrence:

I concur with this determination and the management recommendations provided.

Field Office Manager: W. A. H. G. Date: 8-6-08



**Bureau of Land Management  
Bakersfield District  
Folsom Resource Area**

**Botanical Resource Inventory Report**

**Project name:** Renewal of grazing lease #4210

**Project description:** Renewal of grazing lease for a term of up to 10 years, for cattle grazing, 408 animal unit months.

**Size of disturbance:** Lease size is 7911 acres.

**Project location:** T. 3S, R. 15E, a portion of section 24. T. 3S, R. 16E, all or portions of sections 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36. T. 4S, R. 16E, all or portions of sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12.

**USGS Quads:** Hornitos, Coulterville, Penon Blanco Peak, Merced Falls quads

**County:** Mariposa

**Geographic area:** Sierra foothills

**Elevation range:** 800'-3205'

**Geology/soils:** The geology of the ridges is mapped as Mesozoic volcanic and metavolcanic rocks. Hunter Valley itself is mapped as Jurassic marine sedimentary and metasedimentary rocks.

Soil units mapped include Auburn loam, 2% to 15% slopes; Auburn loam, 15% to 30% slopes, eroded; Auburn stony loam, 30% to 50% slopes; Auburn rocky loam, 30 to 75% slopes, severely eroded; Auburn very rocky loam, 30 to 75% slopes, eroded; Blasingame loam, 2% to 15% slopes; Blasingame rocky loam, 15% to 50% slopes; Blasingame-LasPosas stony loams, 9% to 30% slopes, eroded; Blasingame-Las Posas extremely rocky loams, 30% to 75% slopes, eroded; DAulton loam, 15% to 30% slopes; Loamy alluvial land; Maymen gravelly loam, 30% to 75% slopes, severely eroded; Maymen gravelly loam, over 75% slopes, eroded; Rock land; Trabuco clay loam, 2% to 30% slopes, eroded; Trabuco very rocky clay loam, 15% to 50% slopes, eroded. Auburn and Maymen series soils, and the unit designated "Rock land" (mostly ridge top) predominate.

**Land form:** The major feature of the lease is the ridge of Hunter Valley Mountain running from northwest to southeast, the length of the lease. Short, relatively steep, drainages lead from the ridge to the Merced River. Ridgetops and especially side slopes are the most common land forms.

**Plant community/vegetation:** Plant communities range from non-native annual grassland, to blue oak savannah/woodland to live oak woodland to mixed chaparral. There are many transitional zones with a mosaic of oaks, shrub patches and grassy openings. Among the varied woody species of the lease are gray pine, California juniper, blue oak, interior live oak, California buckeye, chamise, white leaf manzanita, mewukka manzanita, common manzanita, buckbrush, toyon, red bud, holly-leaf redberry, western mountain mahogany, flowering ash, poison oak, pitcher sage, bush poppy, golden fleece, yerba santa, deer weed, gooseberry, blue elderberry.

**CNDDB records:** For three quads, Hornitos, Coulterville, Penon Blanco Peak, these plant species have occurrence records: *Balsamorhiza macrolepis macrolepis*, *Clarkia biloba australis*, *Clarkia rostrata*, *Horkelia parryi*, *Lupinus spectabilis*. There is no serpentine habitat appropriate for *Lupinus spectabilis* in the lease. The one occurrence of balsamroot in the database is just outside the lease boundary on BLM land on Williams Peak. The occurrences of the other species are all north and east of the Merced River.

**Inventory description (methodology, problems, reliability, coverage):** Specific portions of the

lease were surveyed because of their potential for special status species occurrence, or because these sites were being considered for more intensive disturbance for other projects (e.g., a ridgeline fuelbreak that is planned to run most of the length of the lease). Additional information has been developed from previous surveys for projects, a fence project and for a road closure for instance. Botanists spent 6 person-days on lease surveys this year. Because of the size of the lease, nearly 8000 acres, only a small fraction of the lease area was intensively surveyed.

**Sensitive species particularly searched for:** *Balsamorhiza macrolepis macrolepis*, *Fritillaria agrestis*, *Clarkia biloba australis*, *Clarkia rostrata*.

**Sensitive species or other botanical resources at site:** There are several occurrences of big scale balsamroot, *Balsamorhiza macrolepis macrolepis*, a BLM sensitive species. Stinkbells, *Fritillaria agrestis* is also present in several areas of the lease. Stinkbells is tracked by California Native Plant Society, but it is not BLM sensitive.

**Weeds at site:** Italian thistle, yellow starthistle, tocalote, bulbous bluegrass, cocklebur.

**Project impacts:** Big scale balsamroot occurs in many locations on the lease including along Hunter Valley Mountain Road. Many of these areas get significant grazing use. However observation of big scale balsamroot plant shows little if any consumption by livestock. Evidently palatability of the plants is low. So continued grazing is not considered a threat to these occurrences of this BLM sensitive species.

Elderberry shrubs may be impacted by grazing when the plants are small. However this fast growing species, even where it grows in the open, will generally grow above the browse line and thereafter escape most browse damage. Where elderberry shrubs grow surrounded by other shrubs, it is often not browsed.

**Recommendations:** Continue botanical surveys for areas not already covered.

**Date of inventory:** 4/10/08, 4/11/08, 5/1/08, 5/2/08 plus fieldwork from previous years.

**Date of report:** 8/13/08

**Signature:**



**Title:** Botanist

**Bureau of Land Management  
Bakersfield District  
Folsom Resource Area**

**Botanical Resource Inventory Report**

**Project name:** Whittle lease #4138

**Project description:** Renewal of an existing grazing lease, for 8 cattle to graze year-round, 100 AUM.

**Size of disturbance:** Lease size is 420 acres.

**Project location:** T. 1N, R. 13E, portions of sections 5, 8 and 9.

**USGS Quads:** New Melones Dam

**County:** Calaveras

**Geographic area:** Sierra foothills

**Elevation range:** 1000'-1720'

**Geology/soils:** Serpentine substrate runs the length of the parcel from northwest to southeast. Mesozoic volcanic and metavolcanic rocks lie on either side of the serpentine ridge.

**Land form:** A ridge runs the length of the parcel including the peak called Mountain Top, with drainages on either side (French Creek and Bean Gulch).

**Plant community/vegetation:** The central portion of the lease area is a serpentine ridge. This portion of the lease is dominated by chaparral, with chamise chaparral intermingling with a mixed chaparral of chamise, toyon, common manzanita, buckbrush, holly-leaf redberry, shrub monkeyflower, with occasional gray pine and interior live oak. Lower elevationally and west of the ridge there is a transition to blue oak woodland/savannah. Here interior live oak is sometimes a codominant with blue oak, with gray pine, poison oak, common manzanita, buckbrush, chamise, keckiella, western mountain mahogany, bush monkey flower.

**CNDDDB records: Inventory description (methodology, problems, reliability, coverage):** The ridgetop serpentine habitat was given priority in two surveys of the parcel. Intermittent creek habitat with some potential for riparian special status species (*Verbena californica*, *Brodiaea pallida*, *Packera clevelandii*) was not completely surveyed. The first survey in 2004 was relatively late in the season (5/20), and the year was particularly dry, so many species, even perennial species, were past flower.

**Sensitive species particularly searched for:** The suite of serpentine species known from the Red Hills and surrounding serpentine habitat including, *Allium tuolumnense*, *Brodiaea pallida*\*, *Chlorogalum grandiflorum*, *Cryptantha mariposae*, *Lomatium congdonii*, *Lupinus spectabilis*, *Monardella douglasii venosa*, *Packera layneae*, *Packera clevelandii*, *Verbena californica*. (\* *Brodiaea pallida* may not be associated with serpentine, but it occurs locally.)

**Sensitive species or other botanical resources at site:** None found.

**Weeds at site:** Goat grass, Italian thistle, tocalote.

**Project impacts:** None anticipated to special status species.

**Recommendations:** Bean Gulch and French Creek should be thoroughly surveyed.

**Date of inventory:** 5/20/04, 4/29/08

**Date of report:** 8/11/08

**Signature:**

**Title:** Botanist

*Albert Franklin*

Bureau of Land Management  
Folsom Field Office

Biological Resource Inventory Report

Project name: Whittle Allotment  
Project description: Renewal of grazing lease

Size of disturbance: 600 acres  
Project location: T: 1N R: 13E Sections: 5, 8, & 9  
USGS Quads: Melones Dam  
County: Calaveras County  
Elevation range: 1000-1700

Plant community/vegetation: Largely chaparral/chamise. Some areas of oak woodland and grassland. Scattered gray pine. Spring and creek area had willow, alder and cattails.

Inventory description (methodology, problems, reliability, coverage): Field Visit

CNDDB records: None in immediate vicinity.

Results: Elderberry bushes were located on the allotment. There were two groups of bushes in a spring area. One group had 4 large shrubs, and the other group was a line of 6 or shrubs. There are no grazing impacts occurring to the shrubs.

Animal species or sign observed:

Elderberry bushes	Fox scat
Wild turkey	Jackrabbit scat
Common raven	Deer scat
Wren tit	Scrub jay
Western bluebird	House finch
California quail	Ash-throated flycatcher
Woodpecker sp.	Nashville warbler
Northern oriole	Pacific treefrog
Bullfrog	

Recommendations: Because the elderberry bushes are not being impacted by cattle grazing, renew lease.

Date of inventory: 6/12/08

Date of report: 6/27/08

Signature:

*Peggy Ranston*

Title: Wildlife biologist



## Grazing Use Management/Rangeland Health Assessment

Allotment Number: 4183

Quad Name: New Melones Dam

Acres Observed: 80 acres

Lessee: Whittle Ranch, Inc.

AUMs: 100

Current Lease Expiration Date: 2/28/09

BLM Reviews: Field Visit – 06/12/08 – Peggy Cranston

Utilization: There did not appear to be significant grazing use of the allotment, however there was some evidence.

### Central California Standards

Soils: Soils exhibit functional biological and physical characteristics that are appropriate to soil type, climate, and land form.

The portion of the allotment visited had no apparent soil erosion and an RDM of 700 plus pounds per acre. Meets standard.

Species: Healthy, productive, and diverse populations of native species, including special status species (Federal T&E, Federal proposed, Federal candidates, BLM sensitive, or Calif. State T&E) are maintained or enhanced where appropriate.

Elderberry bushes were present on the allotment. These shrubs can support valley elderberry longhorn beetle, a federally threatened species. The bushes on this allotment exhibited no grazing impacts. There are no special status plant species on the allotment.

Weeds were evident on the allotment in some areas. These weeds include medusahead, tocolate thistle, goat grass, and milk thistle. Overall, weeds were not a significant problem.

Meets standard.

Riparian: Riparian/wetland vegetation, structure and diversity and stream channels and floodplains are, or are making significant progress toward, functioning properly and achieving an advanced ecological status.

French Creek was dry, and did not display vegetation characteristics of a riparian area that supports permanent water. It was not appropriate for assessing proper functioning condition.

Bean Gulch, although intermittent, had water including some deep pools. There is also a spring area associated with Bean Gulch. The spring vegetation included willows and cattails. It had some weeds including milk thistle and tocolate thistle. It was assessed as

properly functioning. Bean Gulch vegetation comprised of willows, alder, and cattails. It was assessed as properly functioning.

Meets standard.

Water quality: Surface and groundwater quality complies with California or other appropriate (e.g. Nevada or Tribal) water quality standards.

Meets standard.

Determination:

S&G determination is a 2. Category 2 allotments are allotments where standards are being met or significant progress is being made toward meeting the standard(s).

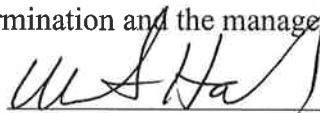
Recommendations/Actions:

1. Continue lease as is.

Concurrence:

I concur with this determination and the management recommendations provided.

Field Office Manager:



Date:

8-12-08

## Grazing Use Management/Rangeland Health Assessment

Allotment Number: 4187      Parcel Name: Sheep Ranch, T4N R17E Sec 17 & 18  
Copperopolis T2N R12E Sec 22

Acres Observed: 40 acres      Lessee: Wooster, Steve and Betty

AUMs: 15      Current Lease Expiration Date: 2/28/09

BLM Reviews: Field Visit – 08/27/98 – Julie Hamon, 09/13/04 – Peggy Cranston

**Background:** A significant portion of the parcels within the lease have been exchanged. This includes all the BLM lands in T 2N R 12E, Sec. 23, 24, 25 and 28. Only 2 parcels remain within the lease. These are the Sheep Ranch parcel in T4N R17E Sec 17 & 18 and the Black Creek parcel in T2N R12E Sec. 22.

**Utilization:** The only portion of the Sheep Ranch parcel that the Woosters are using is located on the west side of Big Hill Road where corrals have been built. At the time of Peggy Cranston's visit, cows were using the east side of the road as well. I was not sure the exact property boundaries, may have been private. It was directly across the road from the corrals. The total area of this parcel being used is approximately 10 acres. There were 25 heifers on the Sheep Ranch parcel at the time of the Julie Hamon's visit.

### Central California Standards

**Soils:** Soils exhibit functional biological and physical characteristics that are appropriate to soil type, climate, and land form.

The portion of the allotment visited had no apparent soil erosion and an RDM of 500-700 pounds per acre. The west side of the road had higher levels of RDM (at least 700 pounds per acre) than the east side of the road (approximately 500 pounds per acre). No apparent erosion from grazing. RDM levels at the Copperopolis pasture were between 700 and 1000 pounds per acre. Soil seemed undisturbed. Meets standard.

**Species:** Healthy, productive, and diverse populations of native species, including special status species (Federal T&E, Federal proposed, Federal candidates, BLM sensitive, or Calif. State T&E) are maintained or enhanced where appropriate.

**Sheep Ranch** – Most of the area is chaparral – manzanita is dominant and filling in the grassy areas. No star thistle was present on the lease. Meets standard.

**Copperopolis** – Most of the allotment is blue oak savannah with some live oaks and bull pine. Patches of buckbrush and manzanita. There were no weeds present. Meets standard.

Bureau of Land Management  
Folsom Field Office

Biological Resource Inventory Report

Project name: Wooster allotment  
Project description: grazing lease

Size of disturbance: 40 acre  
Project location: T: 2N R: 12E Sections: 22  
USGS Quads: Salt Spring Valley  
County: Calaveras County  
Elevation range: 1300-1500

Plant community/vegetation: Largely blue oak woodland with some live oak, valley oak, and bull pine. Steeper slopes also had buckbrush and manzanita. Intermittent drainage with some permanent pools. Moist areas supported willow and sedges.

CNDBB records: None.

Inventory description (methodology, problems, reliability, coverage): Field Visit

Results: No T&E species or habitat expected to support T&E species found within the allotment.

Animal species or sign observed:

Deer	Plain titmouse
Coyote	Acorn woodpecker
Bobcat	California quail
Western fence lizard	Scrub jay
California roach	Rufous-sided towhee

Recommendations: Renew lease.

Date of inventory: 9/13/04 Date of report: 9/14/04  
Signature: *Peggy Canston* Title: Wildlife biologist

**Bureau of Land Management  
Bakersfield District  
Folsom Resource Area**

**Botanical Resource Inventory Report**

**Project name:** Wooster grazing lease #4187

**Project description:** Renewal of existing grazing lease involving two separate parcels, one adjacent to the community of Sheep Ranch, the other northeast of Copperopolis. The lease is for 15 AUMs, one cow at Copperopolis for six months, and 3 cows at Sheep Ranch for 3 months.

**Size of disturbance:** The lease is comprised of 2 separate 40 acre parcels----a total of 80 acres.

**Project location:** Copperopolis parcel: T. 2N, R. 12E, SE1/4 of SE1/4 of section 22. Sheep Ranch parcel: T. 4N, R. 14E, a portion of the NW1/4 of section 17 and NE1/4 of section 18.

**USGS Quads:** Salt Springs Valley Quad (Copperopolis parcel) and Murphy's Quad (Sheep Ranch parcel)

**County:** Calaveras

**Geographic area:** Sierra foothills

**Elevation range:** Sheep Ranch parcel: 2350'-2640'. Copperopolis parcel: 1200'-1520'.

**Geology/soils:** Copperopolis parcel mapped as Mesozoic volcanic and metavolcanics, except for the northeast corner which is mapped as ultramafic. Sheep Ranch parcel mapped as Paleozoic metasedimentary rocks.

**Land form:** Copperopolis parcel is side slopes and drainage bottom. The Sheep Ranch parcel is ridgetop and side slopes. Slopes are moderate to gentle.

**Plant community/vegetation:** Copperopolis parcel: blue oak savannah/woodland transitioning to interior live oak woodland, and non-native annual grassland. The oak communities have other tree species and substantial shrub cover including black oak, gray pine, California buckeye, toyon, poison oak, buckbrush, holly-leaf redberry, keckiella, bush monkeyflower. The riparian zone is surrounded by Himalayan blackberry, with valley oak, arroyo willow, California wild grape. The Sheep Ranch parcel has westside ponderosa pine forest transitioning to whiteleaf manzanita chaparral and non-native annual grassland. Other woody species in the mix include gray pine, interior live oak, black oak, canyon live oak, black walnut, poison oak, buckbrush, French broom.

**CNDDDB records:** For the Murphy's Quad there are records for *Horkelia parryi* and *Mimulus pulchellus*. For the Salt Springs Quad there are records for *Cryptantha mariposae*, *Eryngium pinnatisectum*, and *Eryngium racemosum*. These last three species have very specific substrate requirements and there is no appropriate habitat for these species. There is no vernal pool or similar habitat for the *Eryngium* species. Serpentine is mapped to the northeast of the Copperopolis lease parcel, but the vegetation does not reflect serpentine substrate even in the northeast corner of the parcel. *Cryptantha mariposae* is a serpentine endemic.

**Inventory description (methodology, problems, reliability, coverage):** Both parcels were walked. The boundaries of the Sheep Ranch parcel were difficult to find on the ground. The western tail of the parcel was not surveyed. The land east of Fricot City Road at the Sheep Ranch parcel appears to have been functionally incorporated into the adjacent private land parcel; it is not functioning as part of the grazing lease. It was not surveyed.

**Sensitive species particularly searched for:** At the Sheep Ranch parcel: *Chlorogalum grandiflorum*, *Horkelia parryi*. At the Copperopolis parcel: *Allium tuolumnense*, *Brodiaea pallida*,

*Chlorogalum grandiflorum*, *Cryptantha mariposae*, *Lomatium congdonii*, *Lupinus spectabilis*, *Packera layneae*.

**Sensitive species or other botanical resources at site:** None found.

**Weeds at site:** Copperopolis parcel: edible fig in the riparian area, and Italian thistle. Sheep Ranch parcel: Italian thistle, French broom. There is a large stand of tree-of-heaven just south of the public land. The public land adjacent should be monitored to prevent spread of this species.

**Project impacts:** None to sensitive species.

**Recommendations:** The Copperopolis parcel supports considerable blue oak woodland/savannah, somewhat unusual on the public land. Foothill oak woodlands are being lost to development and are a focus of conservation. A small but impressive stand of valley oak lies near the eastern edge of the Copperopolis parcel. These oak stands, (blue and valley oak), should be considered if management changes are contemplated. Cattle use appears concentrated in an opening east of the main drainage of the parcel. Grazing monitoring should include this area.

**Date of inventory:** Copperopolis, 4/24/08: Sheep Ranch, 4/8/08

**Date of report:** 8/12/08

**Signature:**



**Title:** Botanist

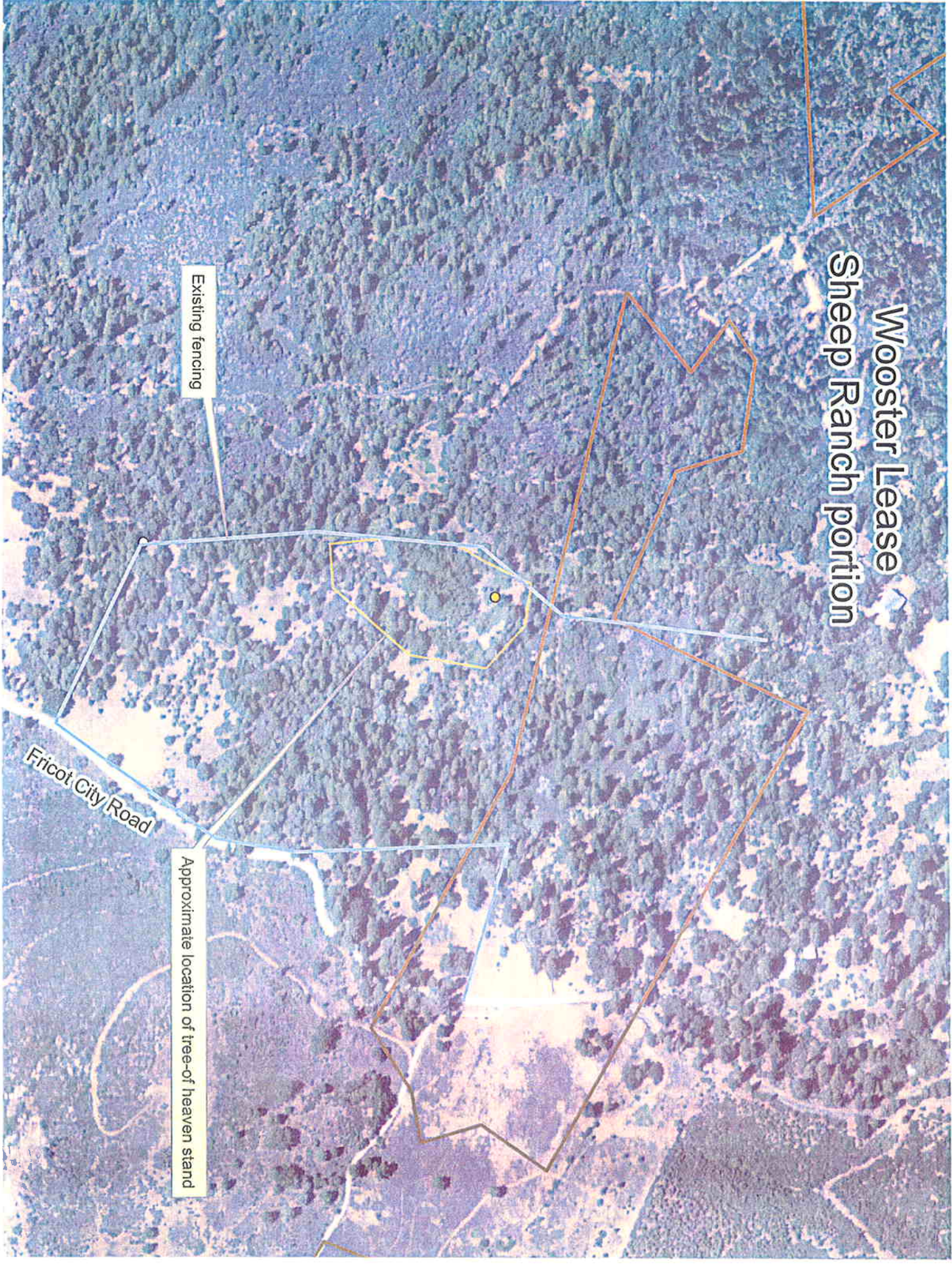


# Wooster Lease Sheep Ranch portion

Existing fencing

Fricot City Road

Approximate location of tree-of-heaven stand





## Wooster Lease, Hwy 4

Potential AML  
Mine with adit and flooded shaft

Old valley oak  
in side drainage

### Weeds

- o Italian thistle

